New England Deaconess Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

pulse

VOLUME 31 – NUMBER 8 MAY 1978

VOLUNTEERS: An ever-growing community of people dedicated to serving our patients

National Volunteer Week (April 16 to 22) took a low profile here this year due to unusually heavy demands placed on the volunteers themselves. A handbag bazaar held in the cafeteria to mark the occasion, however, made everyone aware of the treasures to be found in the Friends Thrift Shop.

Although the number of volunteers has increased by 25 percent over the past year, the number of hours volunteers have put in has risen by 51 percent.

"There has never been such a high level of demand for volunteers," says Volunteer Director, Jane Tilley. "We're now involved in over 17 separate activities including the gift and thrift shops, arts and crafts, medical records, the labs, messenger service and coffee shop cashier."

Volunteers are drawn to the job for many different reasons. Take John V. Cody of Lynnfield, for example. Mr. Cody teaches art full time at Boston State College, he is an associate professor there, but once every week for the past six years he has drawn cartoons for the kids up in the hospital's Diabetes Treatment Unit. In addition, he has illustrated two teaching booklets used by DTU nurses. Why does he volunteer his time? Mr. Cody has two diabetic sons. "We're Joslin people from the word go," he says.

On Wednesdays, Mary Spellman of Brighton, a retired executive secretary for an insurance company, works four hours wheeling the diversional therapy cart to appreciative patients. She shares the work with Marjorie Acomb and Virginia Lemay. Among them, they do much of the buying for the cart and prepare many of the materials at home. Mrs. Acomb, who has been volunteering at the Deaconess for seven years, taught kindergarten and first grade for 40 years.

"Dr. Tullis was my husband's doctor for many years and when he heard I was retiring he just volunteered me on the spot. I've been here ever since," Mrs. Acomb said.

Mrs. Virginia Agnew of Brookline is a five-year veteran of the volunteer program here. She runs a highly praised social program for patients on Farr 10 which she centers around an arts and crafts cart.

A recent major accomplishment of some innovative volunteers is the production of a booklet, 'Boston', describing the city for newcomers. Although the booklet was compiled by wives of Deaconess residents and is aimed primarily at that group, it has been adapted to other uses by the hospital.

While the 72 volunteers currently serving at the Deaconess perform a variety of functions, Mrs. Tilley ensures that each is matched to his or her interests or skills.

"Every person who comes in to volunteer is interviewed and on that basis offered a selection of volunteer activities," Mrs. Tilley says.

Paul Silva is studying human services at Bunker Hill Community College. He is interested in learning more about the hospital industry, so Mrs. Tilley assigned him to various departments such as messenger service, patient service and the blood bank.

"I've learned so much and the people here are just so nice," says Paul, who is earning six college credits for his part-time work.

Anabelle Jones, who wears the traditional green Red Cross uniform, is

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Mrs. George Rohrbough, co-chairman of the Friends Thrift Shop, shows some of the fine paintings available in the store.

TELEPHONE OPERATORS: They do more than just answer the phone

Gladys Healy has worked in the hospital's telecommunications center for 16 years, the last year as chief operator. "During that time not one day has passed when I haven't heard something new," she says. But that's hardly surprising, because in addition to the 33-line switchboard, the center maintains an answering service for 60 doctors who have offices in the Lowry Building and a paging system tied to 275 hospital beepers and 75 long-distance beepers.

And that's not all – The facility also serves as the vital link between the initiators of a Mayday call and those whose job it is to respond to such an emergency. A wall panel alerts the operator to the location and nature of the Mayday call; a quick-reference file lists the appropriate procedure for her to follow.

Also located in the telecommunications center on the Baker roof is the fire alarm control monitor. If an alarm is pulled, a direct line to the Boston Fire Department sends equipment on its way to the Deaconess immediately. But by reading a punched tape produced by the monitor, the operator knows the precise location of such an alarm.

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CELEBRATIONS: 362 employees attend 23rd Service Award dinner

The Twenty-Third Annual Service Award Dinner was held April 13 at the Sheraton-Boston. It was attended by 362 employees, up 16 percent from last year. Only those who have been at the Deaconess five or more years are eligible to attend.

The festivities included a cocktail hour followed by a sumptuous dinner of roast prime ribs of beef. Dancers took to the floor during and after the meal, swaying to the lilting tones of Rudy Delcore's orchestra.

The event was coordinated by Connie Nielsen of personnel who also took care of all the tiny details, such as napkin colors and

(continued on page 2)

Enjoying the congenial amgiance of the Service Award dinner are, from left; Marjorie Pond, administrative assistant; Peter Campisano, associated director; Connie Nielsen, personnel; and Hugh Sycamore, assistant director.

MAGGIE LETVIN ADDRESSES NEUROLOGY GRAND ROUNDS

Maggie Letvin with Anne Siddell at the Farr information desk.

Maggie Letvin, the well-known physical fitness expert who appears three times weekly on channel 44's program, "Maggie and the Beautiful Machine," participated in the hospital's neurology rounds May 4.

Ms. Letvin demonstrated exercises and answered questions from the audience of physicians, nurses, physical therapists, and other members of the health care team on the problems of treating patients with lower back pain. She has recently written a book on the subject entitled *Healing the Hurt in Your Lower Back.*

Pearl Root, R.N., Dr. Stephen R. Friedberg's nurse at the Lahey Clinic, coordinated the event.

Dr. Samir D. Kassissieh addresses meeting of the Kidney Transplant/Dialysis Association Inc. To right of podium is George Arena, president of the organization.

Kidney failure patients face difficult choices

Patients with kidney failure face three hard choices. For many of them one choice is a trip to a dialysis center, like the one on Palmer 2, two or three times a week. If a family member is trained to help, the patient is often able to perform dialysis at home. Many patients, however, seek transplantation, which if successful can enable them to live a reasonably normal life.

But as Dr. Samir D. Kassissieh, Internal Medicine, pointed out at the April 16th meeting of the Kidney Transplant/Dialysis Association, Inc., transplantation remains a risky operation with potentially serious side effects.

Speaking to association members in the Deaconess 3 classroom, Dr. Kassissieh said, "The chance that a cadaver kidney will still be working after one year is only 50 percent, but that figure goes up to about 80 percent if the organ is from a living, related donor." However, the greater proportion of transplants still originate with cadaver kidneys, and he emphasized the urgent need for both types of donations.

The Kidney Transplant/Dialysis Association, Inc. is an 800-member group dedicated to helping renal patients in coping with the psychological, financial and social problems often encountered in adjusting to their conditions. Special emphasis is placed on helping new or prospective patients in overcoming their fears and anxieties, and in learning more about what dialysis and transplantation will mean for them.

Medical experts, such as Dr. Kassissieh, are often invited to address the association's regularly scheduled bi-weekly meetings. Several social events are included on the calendar. Dr. Kassissieh's topic was "The Choice Between Dialysis and Transplantation."

He dealt with the vexing problems of rejection and ways to combat them, including the use of steroids such as Prednisone and Imuran, as well as other still experimental medications such as ATG or ALG. Dr. Kassissieh also described the surgical complexities of hooking up a donor kidney to the patient.

"There are three surgically-related problems in renal transplantation which fortunately are rare," Dr. Kassissieh explained. "First, there is the problem of connecting the blood supply and ensuring sufficient flow to keep the organ alive. Second, bladder leaks and ureteral obstruction can occur, and third, lymphatic material may collect around the kidney, sometimes blocking the ureter.

On the other hand, Dr. Kassissieh pointed out dialysis carries its own special drawbacks. The need for a functional vascular access to allow repetitive hemodialysis is the most obvious one, but anemia, bone problems and hepatitis are not uncommon.

"No pressure is ever applied to the patient to accept one course of treatment or another," Dr. Kassissieh said. "We always explain the various options in an unbiased way and let the patient decide on his own which one is right for him. Of course we will recommend certain alternatives if sound medical reasons exist for such recommendations. But by and large it's up to the patient."

54 secretaries attend workshop

In recognition of National Secretaries Week, April 24 through 28, a training event, attended by 54 secretaries, was held on Wednesday, April 26 from 9:30 a.m. until noon in Howland Auditorium, Audrey K. Kennedy Hall.

Following registration, coffee and announcements, Ms. Barbara Slater, a public relations consultant and former columnist for the Boston *Herald American,* led a problem-solving workshop emphasizing creativity in finding solutions to perplexing situations. Both group and individual exercises provided practice in problem-solving skills. Ms. Slater also provided exercises designed to produce clearer communication, such as one-on-one paraphrasing sessions and role plays in front of the group.

The training event was coordinated by the Deaconess' Secretarial Committee, which is currently developing a secretarial manual, initiating monthly orientation groups for new secretaries, and instituting a secretaries' newsletter.

award dinner . . .

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William D. Weeks

flower arrangements, that helped make the evening so delightful.

William D.Weeks, a Deaconess Trustee deeply involved in legislative affairs as they affect the hospital, delivered a speech in which he outlined the hazards of increased government intervention in hospital affairs. President Laurens MacLure spoke on 'What Lies Ahead for the Deaconess'.

For Service Award recipients and profiles, see back page.

volunteers . . .

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among those volunteers who work with the psychiatric patients on Deac. 4. Her interest in the Deaconess was first sparked by Miss Amelia Peabody, a longtime friend and benefactor of the hospital.

Volunteers at the Deaconess are contributing more than 1100 hours a month. To an observer they help to 'humanize' the institution. For a patient facing an array of bewildering technology in a strange environment, the pink-smocked volunteers impart a sense of normalcy. Moreover, the volunteers' unselfish devotion to the welfare of our patients is an inspiration and example to the entire Deaconess community.

A tea organized by the volunteers honors the memory of Mrs. Louise Francis who contributed more than 5000 hours to volunteer activities, primarily in medical records where a plaque, unveiled at the tea, will hang in her honor. Jane Tilley, volunteer director, stands at right.

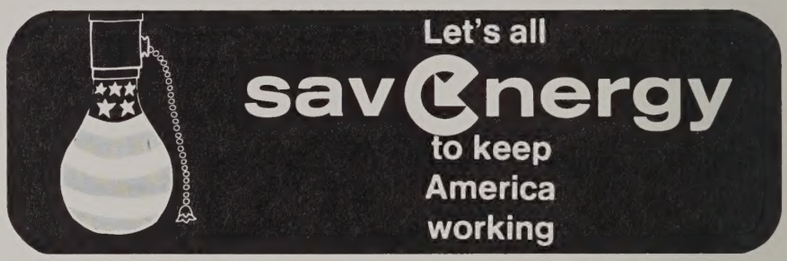
ALAN FREUND
1948-1978

Alan Freund, on the Deaconess staff since 1965, had been night administrator for the past ten years. His death April 13 has brought sadness and a profound feeling of loss to his many friends at the hospital. He was 30.

Mr. Freund was born in Paris and came with his parents to the United States and settled in Roxbury. He graduated from Brookline High School in 1966 and from Northeastern University in 1971. He was a candidate for a masters degree in business administration from Suffolk University which he would have received this spring.

The sentiments of those who knew and worked with Alan Freund are suitably expressed in the words of night information desk clerk, Paul Fordham: "Coming into work Saturday nights isn't great, but Alan made it fun for all of us. Everyone loved Alan."

The family wishes to express deepest thanks to all those who responded to their loss so generously with flowers and contributions.



Like last year's football champions or last year's fashion fads, the energy crisis is dismissed by many people as last year's news. Unfortunately, nothing could be farther from the truth. The need to save energy is still very much with us this year, and it's going to be with us for years to come.

How can this be, you may wonder, when only a short time ago Americans were consuming energy as though there were an endless, cheap supply? That extravagant approach to energy consumption is part of the answer. The other part is that the crisis didn't really sneak up on us but has been building for years as we consumed more and more energy and could no longer meet our demands with domestic supplies.

In 1900 the U.S. used the equivalent of 4 million barrels of oil a day. By 1950 the figure had increased only to 16 million. But by 1970 it had mushroomed to 32 million, and if we were to continue this rate of growth (which we shouldn't) we'd need 64 million barrels a day by 1985.

Consider our energy imports, which used to be negligible. Currently they account for about 30 percent of our requirements, and within a very few years we could be depending upon imports for 50 percent of our oil needs. As the mid-East embargo of 1974 showed, this would put us in a very vulnerable and costly position.

In the long term we can increase our domestic energy supply capability. But it takes 3 to 5 years to build an oil refinery or launch a coal mining operation, and it takes 8 to 10 years to bring a nuclear power plant on stream.

So for the short term of the next few years, our only choice is to hold down energy demand. Since American business accounts for nearly 70 percent of our total energy consumption through its industrial, commercial and transportation activities, it must bear the brunt of implementing good energy management. By and large hospitals have responded extremely well to this challenge. The Deaconess has reduced its utility costs over the past four years by nearly a million dollars without compromising our high standards of patient care.

Many of these savings are being brought about through common sense practice – the same kind you use in your own home when you turn off lights not in use, lower your furnace thermostat in winter and reduce the running of your air conditioners in summer. But conservation efforts in the hospital require the understanding and support of employees who can make the most valuable contributions to energy conservation.

For the next several issues of *The Pulse,* practical energy-saving tips for the home will appear in this space. We hope you will find them helpful.

Deaconess lends a hand to jobless young people

New England Deaconess Hospital is participating in Project YES, a federally-funded job subsidy program aimed at economically disadvantaged young men and women in major U.S. cities.

The program, which employs young people between the ages of 16 and 19, is designed to encourage participants to remain in, or return to, school. An 18-month program, YES provides part-time jobs (10 to 20 hours a week) during the school year and full-time jobs (30 to 40 hours a week) during vacations. The City of Boston picks up the payroll costs, so no expense is incurred by the Deaconess or other participating businesses.

Carolyn Robinson

Program administrators emphasize that YES in no way replaces or displaces regular adult employees nor does it obligate departmemt heads to keep any youth who is performing unsatisfactorily.

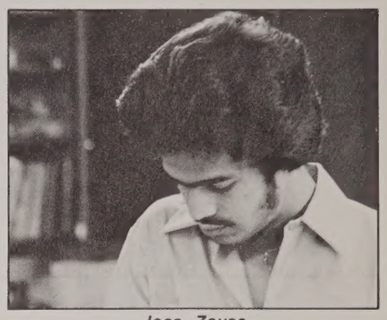
The Deaconess became involved in YES as a result of the City of Boston's publicity about the program and originally pledged to provide 50 jobs ranging from clerical assistants to messengers, print room workers, and housekeeping aids. Currently 20 young people are working at the Deaconess with 15 more slated to arrive soon. Among the departments involved in YES are personnel, materials management, building services, nursing, service coordination, administration, maintenance and engineering, and dietetics.

According to Pamela Dilday, employment manager in personnel, hospital supervisors and department heads have been extremely supportive of YES. "We would like to thank them for their support in embracing the program," she said.

YES participant Carolyn Robinson, a 17-year-old senior at Cathedral High School in the South End, finds her placement at the Deaconess particularly appropriate because she wants to be a nurse. Currently working as clerical assistant in telecommunications on the Baker roof, Carolyn will maintain her work schedule until September when she leaves Boston to attend either Fisk or Howard University. A member of her high school basketball and volleyball teams, Carolyn participates in school plays and finds time to tutor freshmen.

Madison Park High School junior Jose Zayas, assistant in maintenance and engineering, would like to attend Berklee College of Music to learn arranging and composing. In addition to playing trumpet, bass and drums, Jose is a gymnast who would like to share his love of the sport by teaching children.

Another maintenance assistant is Phil Bishop from Dorchester High School. He wants to attend an out-of-state university. "I've been in Boston all my life and I'd like to get out and go somewhere," Phil said. A sports enthusiast, Phil plays football and baseball for Dorchester High and writes sports stories for the school newspaper.



Jose Zayas

operators . . .

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This information is relayed by phone to the fire department who relay it by radio to the men on their way to the hospital. By the time the firefighters arrive, they know the exact location, and even nature, of the fire.

As soon as a fire alarm is sounded, the operator would also hit a 'group alert' button which automatically sets off 15 beepers carried by the hospital's own specially trained fire brigade. Informed of the fire's location over their beepers, these employees would be the first ones on the scene.

A sprinkler system monitor was installed recently to warn of any malfunction. If part of the system is shut down for any reason, or a sprinkler goes off, an alarm signals the exact location. In the case of a sprinkler that starts by itself when no fire is present, a maintenance crew is directed to the scene keeping water damage to a minimum.

Any problem with the oxygen and nitrous oxide gas distribution system is likewise signaled to the operators. In such an emergency, a maintenance crew would be dispatched to investigate the trouble.

Not only must the operators be continuously alert for these emergency situations and be prepared to respond appropriately to them, they must also field the 4000 calls that come into the switchboard daily and route each to one of the 1250 hospital extensions. The night and weekend operators have the additional responsibility of handling emergency calls for the Joslin Clinic and Roxbury Dental and Medical Group.

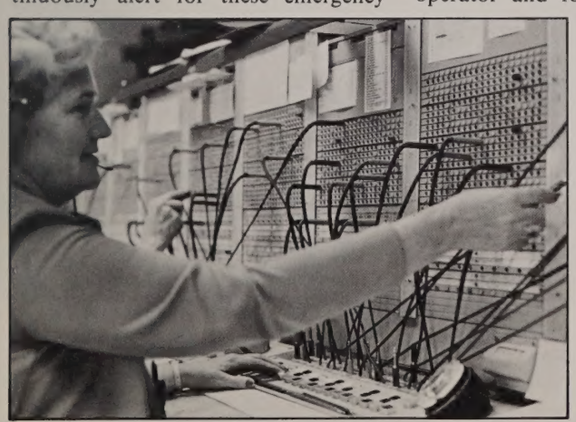
"The work volume has increased rapidly for us," Mrs. Healy says. "In 1966 we took about a thousand calls a day. Now the figure is four times that."

The cost of the hospital's telephone service has increased dramatically too. In 1966 telephone expenses averaged $10,000 a month. That figure is now $38,000.

However, the Deaconess still holds the distinction of being one of the few hospitals that offers free local telephone service to its patients. Incoming calls to patients number about 800 a day.

"Part of the reason for our high telephone costs," Mrs. Healy explains, "is that employees are unaware that we are on a measured service, even for local calls. In other words, the longer you talk, the more it costs."

The demands made on the paging system have just now passed the point where one operator is able to run it, and the system is presently being adapted to accommodate a second operator and four more page lines.



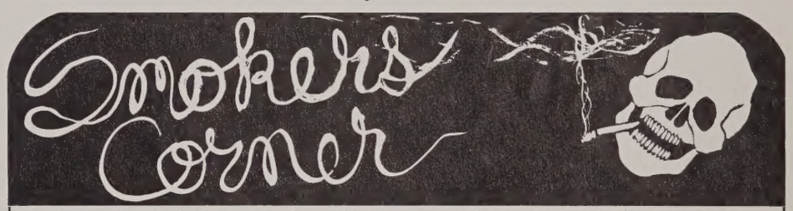
Gladys Healy works the hospital's 33-line switchboard. The operators handle about 4000 calls a day in addition to 1250 page calls.

"Between nine in the morning and six at night we average 1250 page calls," Mrs. Healy says. "It was too much for one person to stay on top of. But with two operators and an expanded capacity, the system will be much more efficient.

"Those who routinely receive a lot of page calls could help us enormously by letting us know where they are and where they're going to be. We're more than willing to do anything we can for people, but this would be easier if they would be sure to let us know what they wanted us to do."

The job of the Deaconess operators brings them into direct contact with patients and their families often at a time of severe emotional stress. Says Mrs. Healy: "We will always go out of our way to help with information, the relaying of messages, or any other special request.

Her positive, cooperative attitude, shared by the other 16 operators, contributes significantly to our reputation as a hospital that puts concern for the individual patient and his family above all else.



The physical dangers of smoking are now so well documented and pose such a serious national health problem that the current administration in Washington is gearing up for an aggressive anti-smoking campaign.

Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Joseph A. Califano, recently announced a number of new actions comprising a program against smoking, including the creation of a new Office of Smoking and Health.

In announcing these initiations, secretary Califano maintained that "people who smoke are committing slow-motion suicide." He cited the following facts to support his contention:

- Last year, smoking was a major factor in 220,000 deaths from heart disease; 78,000 lung cancer deaths; and 22,000 deaths from other cancers, including cancer of the mouth, cancer of the esophagus, cancer of the pancreas, cancer of the kidney and cancer of the bladder.
- 40 percent of all cancer in males is caused by smoking.
- 85 percent of deaths from bronchitis emphysema and other lung disease would not happen – if people would stop smoking.
- Most tragically, we now know that unborn children whose mothers smoke during pregnancy may be stillborn or developmentally deficient because of their mothers' heavy smoking.

Califano revealed that since the 1964 Surgeon General's Report, smoking has proved to be even more dangerous than was originally believed; it accounts for even more diseases and disorders than was realized fourteen years ago. For example:

- Women who take birth control pills – particularly women aged 30 and over – are up to 50 times more likely to have heart attacks if they smoke.
- Recent experiments have shown that babies absorb nicotine before birth, with clear effects on their respiration and other vital signs.
- There is evidence that certain industrial workers who smoke, particularly asbestos and cement workers, run dramatically greater risks of cancer and other lung disease because smoking interacts with other dangerous substances.

"So the evidence of fourteen years – fourteen years of intensive biomedical research, fourteen years of expensive effort by the most skilled physicians and experts in epidemiology is clear. It cannot be ignored. Smoking ruins health. Smoking kills," Califano said.

Service Award profiles

Eight employees who have served the Deaconess for a combined total of 230 years were honored at the Service Award dinner by the General Board of Health and Welfare ministries of the United Methodist Church. Ellen D. Howland and Charles Schraub have been at the Deaconess since 1943, Conrad Casto and Virginia Hunt since 1948; They are profiled below. Margaret Burns, Juanita R. Gonzales, Ramon Gonzales, and Chilla K. Merrill were honored for 25 years of service. All were presented with certificates by Director Richard E. Lee.

ELLEN D. HOWLAND (35 YEARS)

To anyone with ties to the Deaconess, Miss Howland needs no introduction. She is as much an integral part of the institution as the School of Nursing Auditorium that bears her name.

A 1942 graduate of the school, Miss Howland rose through the nursing ranks until 1967 when she was appointed an assistant director of the hospital in addition to her position as director of the School of Nursing; but since that time she feels the emphasis in administrative positions has changed.

Ellen D. Howland

"My time is now occupied more with financial management and business concerns than with the actual delivery of care and classroom contact. My job is to keep our department financially sound and in line with federal and state regulations through working with the accounting department and other members of the administrative staff. I understand the necessity for this, and I have to accept these activities as the contribution I can now make. But it's the former close association with the patients, staff and students that I miss.

"There has been a positive direction in the general administrative process, however. Historically, it was the nature of 'the system' for the director of nursing to be more autocratic and less approachable. It has been good to be able to help in the development of what I hope has become a more supportive and participative role for the nursing administration with their department staff.

"But now it seems as though I am returning via a different route to the isolation my predecessors had, not by design, but because of the pressure of administrative demands.

"Whatever has changed, however, it's not been the quality of education or nursing care. There is still the same feeling of caring and concern among the staff and students."

VIRGINIA HUNT (30 YEARS)

"The hospital still has the same friendly atmosphere that it did when it was small," says supervisor of the admissions lab, Virginia Hunt, and you can take her word for that; she's been a part of the Deaconess for 30 years.

After a stint as an Army operating room nurse in Africa, Italy, France, and Germany during World War II, Miss Hunt came back home to Needham and settled in at the Deaconess.

Virginia Hunt

She still lives in Needham with her mother and sister where she likes to garden and watch ball games on T.V.

Most of all, Miss Hunt and her family enjoy their home on Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire. "We go up there whenever we can during the summer," Miss Hunt says.

She worked for many years as the blood bank supervisor, but likes the admissions lab because it brings her into contact with patients and the many students for whom the lab is part of their training.

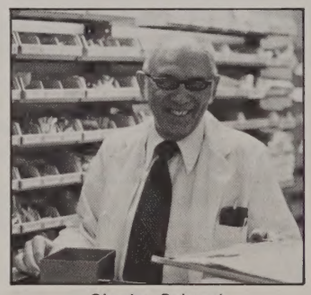
"I'm about the only permanent fixture around here," she says.

CHARLES F. SCHRAUB (35 YEARS)

Charlie Schraub started work at the Deaconess in 1943 "when the hospital had 300 employees and Dr. Warren Cook – that's doctor of divinity – was director of the hospital." He has been Chief of Pharmacy since 1952. Aside from his considerable professional contributions, such as the complete modernization of the pharmacy operation, Charlie is probably best known for his longtime support of the hospital's bowling league and softball team. In fact he is a founding member of the softball league which now includes 14 teams.

Charlie lives in Dedham but escapes to his 150-year-old Maine farmhouse at every opportunity. "We have a beaver pond stocked with trout and Sugarloaf Mountain is just 20 miles away. I love it there," Charlie says.

He recalls wistfully the old days at the hospital when "if you wanted an extra desk or some extra help, you just asked. Now there are all kinds of special procedures and a pile of forms to fill out. We've certainly become much more bureaucratic, but the Deaconess still has that same strong personal quality it's always had."



Charles Schraub

CONRAD CASTO (30 YEARS)

Conrad Casto is a buyer in the hospital's purchasing department. He's been buying materials and supplies for the hospital for 30 years. Mr. Casto began his Deaconess career in the pharmacy, doing buying and inventory work.

Conrad Casto

"In those days most of the hospital's purchasing was done through the pharmacy." Mr. Casto recalls, but when the system was reorganized, his skills and knowledge were invaluable to the purchasing department.

Mr. Casto lives in Roslindale with his wife, Elena, to whom he has been married for 19 years. They enjoy day trips to the Cape and taking photographs of historic sights. "Plymouth Rock is a favorite," Mr. Casto says.

"But the Deaconess has been my life. I began as a jack-of-all-trades in the pharmacy and learned a lot," said Mr. Casto, adding, "I feel like I'm always among old friends."

New England Deaconess Hospital
185 Pilgrim Road
Boston, Massachusetts 02215

pulse

The New England Deaconess Hospital is a 489-bed and 14-building complex. Physicians from the Joslin Clinic, the Lahey Clinic, Overholt Thoracic Clinic and the general medical and surgical staffs serve the needs of their patients at the hospital. The Deaconess is internationally known for diagnosis, treatment and research in brain and chest surgery, cancer, diabetes and general medicine, and is affiliated with Harvard Medical School.

PULSE is published monthly by the public relations department of the New England Deaconess Hospital.

LAURENS MACLURE
President
RICHARD E. LEE
Director
M. ELEANOR CLAPP
Public Relations Director
ADRIAN BIRKETT
Public Relations Assistant
CAROLINE YOUNG
Editorial Assistant

The Deaconess telephone operators monitor the fire alarm system and coordinate information during emergencies in addition to manning the switchboard and paging system. See front page.

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